

MINUTES
PAGE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORK SESSION
MAY 4, 2010

All Members Present: Johnny Woodward, Chairman, At-Large
Robert Griffith, District 1
Larry A. Sours, District 2
J. D. Cave, District 3

Absent: Jeff Vaughan, District 5

Staff Present: Dr. Thomas Cardman, County Administrator
Kevin Henry, Director of Planning
Henry Mikus, Director of Public Works
Charlie Campbell, Commissioner of the Revenue
Regina Miller, Executive Secretary

Media & Others Present: Luther Johnson, *Page News & Courier*
10 County Employees & Citizens

Call to Order:

Chairman Johnny Woodward called to order the work session of the Page County Board of Supervisors on May 4, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the Board of Supervisors Room, located in the Courthouse, noting a quorum was present.

Presentation on the Transient Occupancy Tax:

Karen Riddle, Board of Directors, Luray-Page County Chamber of Commerce, first introduced Briana Campbell as the new President of the Chamber. She then continued with her presentation on the transient occupancy tax for the period of October 2009 through March 2010. She reported that the state of Virginia has once again been ranked number one as a great place to do business. Governor McDonnell, she said, has declared that there is a great correlation between bringing jobs to Virginia by selling Virginia through tourism. Thus, he has expanded the state budget by \$7.2 million for tourism over the next two years. She explained that the Chamber's marketing plan for 2010 remains solid and their commitment is to promote our natural and historic treasures. Their main goal is to attract more visitors to come to Page County. She mentioned that because of not knowing the economic conditions for this year, they actually budgeted 10% lower based on the economic future. The income in spending related to tourism in Page County was increased by 15.9%. Due to the increased spending on tourism over the previous year, Page County ranked number one in the Shenandoah Valley, and ranked number two of 134 counties and cities across the state. Mrs. Riddle mentioned that when looking at the tax for the entire year, it is only down by 5.5%. When a visitor comes to the County they pay a 9% lodging tax, 5% of which is sales tax, and 4% is actually lodging tax. Of the lodging tax, 2% goes to the County and the other 2% goes into a fund to be used specifically for tourism and growing the region.

The figures she presented exclude Stanley, Luray, and Shenandoah because the lodging tax collected in the towns goes in the town's general fund, not the County's. An innovative approach being taken by the Chamber to increase tourism is by providing press releases and editorials to international travel writers. In looking at ways to move forward, it is all about partnership and taking the marketing dollars and doing cooperative opportunities for businesses throughout the area that help to promote the County. She then thanked the Board for their continued support.

Manufactured Home Assessments:

Charlie Campbell, Commissioner of the Revenue, addressed the Board in regard to the proposed Zoning Ordinance amendment to manufactured homes, requiring new double wide homes to have a permanent foundation. The Board held a public hearing on the proposed amendment at their April 20th meeting. As a result, they asked for the Commissioner to give an explanation on whether or not the owner's taxes would remain the same if the double wide were converted from personal property to real estate. Mr. Campbell stated that he could not guarantee that the value of the home would change. Anytime something such as a foundation is added to property then the value will increase and there will be some change in the assessment. All properties that are converted will not remain the same, but it is based on the individual property. He stated that earlier he recommended to the Zoning Administrator that the ordinance amendment should only affect new homes, not ones that already exist.

Kevin Henry, Planning Director, mentioned that the change was not meant to require home owners of double-wides that currently exist to have foundations, but would be to require them of any new homes. He clarified that the ordinance amendment was tabled because the Board wanted to hear from Mr. Campbell on the assessment and taxation of the homes.

Mr. Campbell stated that it is currently in the ordinance requiring manufactured homes in subdivisions to be set and classified as real property. He said that many lending institutions will not loan money for homes classified as personal property.

Mr. Henry clarified that in the current ordinance a foundation is required on these homes in a residentially zoned subdivision. This change would require a foundation in the agricultural and woodland-conservation zoning districts for double-wides. Single-wides would still be allowed to be anchored.

After discussion, it was the consensus of the Board to keep the proposed amendment tabled.

Report from the Public Works Department:

Henry Mikus, Director of Public Works, reported that the March landfill revenue was positive at \$135,871. Even though the months from November to February did not meet revenue projections, he is still ahead with expenditures. Trash tonnage for March was 4,855, with 3,646 tons of that revenue generating, and 954 tons were residential with no fee. He also noted that 256 tons were recycled during March.

Chairman Woodward stated that he receives questions about trucks going around the scales at the landfill. He mentioned that this does happen but it is not trucks disposing of trash, but these are trucks loading free dirt, which do not get weighed. Mr. Mikus added that County trucks also go around the scales to dump from the citizen convenience area in three bins. When people come into the landfill, and if they are paying a fee they are weighed when they enter and when they exit. This trash does not need to get weighed twice, so these bins are not weighed, and are hauled directly to the landfill.

Mr. Mikus continued with his report noting that the chief project for the month has been applying a one-foot layer of intermediate cover to the surfaces of Cell 8. Regulations require any landfill area that is not going to receive added waste layers for at least 30 days to be given this extra layer of cover soils. He mentioned that the annual Recycling Rate Report was completed and submitted to the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission, who collates and submits a summary report for the region to VADEQ by April 30. He noted that state law requires localities to recycle 25%, and our rate was 28%. He informed the Board that the County hosts the Glass Recycling Program for the region and it will be used in Frederick County to grind their accumulated glass. Due to the detection of gas in the perimeter probe at Battle Creek Landfill, a gas remediation plan was submitted to DEQ. The strong suspicion, because of the probe location and depth, is that an old land-clearing stump-dump from 1998 is the cause of the probe measurements rather than gas migrating from the landfill.

Mr. Mikus then addressed the Board regarding the groundwater monitoring wells at the Stanley Landfill. He said he has spoke with the owner of the property near the Stanley Landfill where they wish to install the two new wells. The County Attorney is working out the required documentation for this agreement with the owner to proceed. Regarding the warning letter from DEQ on this matter, he said that the regional DEQ office wanted to work with the County on the installation of the wells because they are aware of the County's financial situation. However, the issue is with the central DEQ office in Richmond. A warning letter was issued to put the County on notice that the wells had to be installed. The warning letter allows time to elapse in order to develop a schedule that takes us to the end of the fiscal year. As a result, he corresponded with DEQ indicating the project would be completed in a certain order, which was acceptable to DEQ. This will then come to the County as a consent order.

Dr. Cardman expressed that no one has ignored this issue. However, this is the County's ability, through good relationships with DEQ, to postpone the inevitable because there were no budgetary resources to address the wells this fiscal year.

Next, Mr. Mikus pointed out that the 1831 portion of the Courthouse Building in the Circuit Court has cracks in the plaster; however, the wall has not moved and the cracks could be a result of the leaks in the roof. He said he is working with the Sheriff to provide power to the Emergency Communications Center and when that is complete there will be the availability from that generator to provide power to a portion of the

Courthouse. In addition, the project on installing a generator for the Administration Building is almost complete. Lastly, under items for the Board to consider, he previously mentioned the possibility of looking at the gas project with a third party. If the County were to finance the project, the estimated cost was \$3.6 million, with a return on investment of 8 years and after recouping the cost, it would yield an annual income of an average \$500,000 over 20 years. Due to the financial conditions of the County, there is no funding to pay for this. An alternative possibility is to partner with a third party to develop the project and pay a royalty to the County for the gas rights. This option would generate about 20% of the income amounting to less than \$100,000 per year. However, the County would not have to pay for the project upfront. At some point, he said the County will need to install an active flaring gas destruction system at the landfill, which will cost several million dollars. If the County does something positive with the gas before we are forced to, then income can be earned under greenhouse gas credits. If the third party option were to occur, then they would pay for the installation and the County would avoid the cost and maintenance of the system. He said he is continuing to research this option.

E911 Ordinance Amendments Adoption:

Dr. Cardman mentioned that as a matter of clarification, at the April 20th meeting the Board held a public hearing and discussed amendments to the E911 ordinance. There was some confusion on whether or not the Board passed the ordinance. At that meeting, it was recommended by staff to strike the sentence of the current ordinance, which reads: "Failure to post an address is subject to a Class IV misdemeanor", because this penalty is too strong. However, staff suggested this language be replaced with "The willful failure to post address number shall be subject to a civil penalty of \$25.00". He said the penalty would only be imposed after at least two requests were made to homeowner to post it without penalty. The Board needs to either take no action or to adopt the amended ordinance, with the civil penalty violation.

After discussion, it was the consensus of the Board to place this matter on the May 18th meeting agenda for action.

Set Public Hearing Date for the County Budget:

Dr. Cardman remarked that the Board needs to set the public hearing date for the County budget and a date for the budget adoption.

After discussion, it was the consensus of the Board to set the public hearing date for June 1st with the adoption scheduled for June 15th.

Adjourn: 8:27 p.m.

With no further business, Chairman Woodward adjourned the meeting.


Chairman